

exhibited live at a meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society, as also were specimens of *P. rostrana*, though at the time the identity of both was unknown. SM also subsequently reared two specimens from larvae which had gone unnoticed presumably enfolded in some moribund leaves. On the basis of presumed correlation with the origin of the exotic plants from Florida, I determined this second species on superficial characters to be *Pyroderces rileyi* (Walsingham) using the key in the appropriate fascicle of *The Moths of America North of Mexico*.

The specimen was left at the Natural History Museum for the subsequent attention of Dr Miriam Pitkin who later returned it agreeing that it "may be that species, or more probably *P. hemizopha* Meyr. (from East Africa and India)." However, this statement was most probably made in ignorance of the provenance of the botanical specimens on which it was feeding which is not consistent with the range of the latter species, and Dr Pitkin's diagnosis, like mine, was based on superficial characters only. I am therefore inclined to stand by my original tentative determination, though stress that this is on the basis of the description of the larva and the key to superficial characters of the adults in the above publication and on the assumption from the circumstantial evidence that it is indeed an American species. Having no key to world species of this genus, I have not examined the genitalia and am unable to confirm the determination by these means.— L.W. HARDWICK, 4 Caister Way, Over, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1LT.

### **Length of pupal stage in *Xanthia citrigo* Linn. (Lep.: Noctuidae)**

In Heath and Emmet (eds.) 1983, *MBGBI* vol. 10, the Orange Sallow *Xanthia citrigo* is stated to spend only about two weeks as a pupa. This seems an unrealistically short time for such a moth, so when breeding the species *ab ovis* in 1997 from a locally caught female, I made a point of checking the length of the pupal stage.

The larvae spun cocoons on or just below the surface of peat. Like others in the group, they lie dormant for six to eight weeks before pupating. Towards the end of this period, three of the cocoons were picked up every few days, and shaken gently. It was obvious from the rattle when the larva had pupated. The cocoon was then opened to confirm this.

Kept at normal room temperature, the pupae developed slowly and gradually. Moths emerged after minima of 42, 43 and 44 days respectively – six weeks rather than two.

Incidentally, when rearing this species from overwintered eggs, it is vital to prevent these hatching too early. The small larvae need young lime *Tilia* leaves from naturally bursting buds, and seem unable to survive for more than a few days on the leaf scales exposed when buds are peeled open by hand, even if they can be persuaded to eat them all.— ROY LEVERTON, Whitewells, Ordiquhill, Cornhill, Banffshire AB45 2HS.